

1188

CHARLES V. AND THE DISCOVERY OF CANADA

BY
H. P. BIGGAR, F.R.Hist.S.
(OF THE CANADIAN ARCHIVES)

READ BEFORE THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ON APRIL 19, 1917

Printed by
SPOTTISWOODE, BALLANTYNE & CO. LTD.
1 NEW-STREET SQUARE, LONDON

1918

891010
291010

CHARLES V AND THE DISCOVERY OF CANADA

By H. P. BIGGAR, F.R.Hist.S. (of the Canadian Archives)

To Canadians, and perhaps to English people as well, it will come as a surprise to learn that in the sixteenth century an Emperor of Germany laid claim not only to Canada, but also to the region now embraced within the borders of the United States. The basis of the claim was a bull issued by Pope Alexander VI in 1493.

Christopher Columbus reached Spain on his return from the discovery of America in March 1493, and the bull in question, *Inter cetera*, was issued by Alexander VI on May 4, 1493. Alexander VI was not only himself an Aragonese, but was under considerable obligation to King Ferdinand of Aragon, Isabella of Castile's husband, for favours conferred both upon himself when Bishop of Valencia, and also upon his son, the notorious Caesar Borgia, whom Ferdinand had legitimised in 1481 and nominated Bishop of Pampluna in 1491.¹

The essential portion of this bull *Inter cetera* of May 4, 1493, which was addressed to Ferdinand and Isabella, reads as follows :—

‘ We of our own motion . . . free will and certain knowledge, and with the plenitude of apostolic power, by the authority of God omnipotent granted to us through blessed Peter and of the vicarship of Jesus Christ which we exercise upon earth, by the tenour of these presents, give, concede, and assign for ever to you and to the kings of Castile and Leon, your successors, all the islands and mainlands discovered, and which may hereafter be discovered, towards the west and north, with all their dominions,

¹ H. Van der Linden, ‘ Alexander VI and the Demarcation of the Maritime and Colonial Domains of Spain and Portugal, 1493-1494,’ in the *American Historical Review*, vol. xxii. 1-20, October 1916.

cities, castles, places, and towns, and with all their rights, jurisdictions and tenancies . . . and we make, constitute, and depute you and your foresaid heirs and successors lords of them with full, free and absolute power and authority and jurisdiction, drawing, however, and fixing a line from the Arctic pole to the Antarctic pole, which line must be distant from any one of the islands vulgarly called the Azores and Cape Verde islands, 100 leagues west and south. . . .

'And we most strictly forbid every person whatsoever, and of whatsoever dignity (even imperial or royal), state, degree, order or condition they may be, under the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*, which they will incur from the very fact of transgression, to presume, either for trafficking, or for any other purpose whatsoever, to approach, without special licence from you and your foresaid heirs and successors, the islands and mainlands found or that shall be found beyond this line.' ¹

Portugal at once raised objections, and sent commissioners to Spain to negotiate an agreement which was concluded on June 7, 1494, at Terdesillas.² By this treaty the line was moved from 100 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands to 370 leagues west of those islands. All lands and islands discovered in the ocean to the east of this line were to belong to Portugal, while everything found to the westward became of right the property of the Spanish monarchs.

This agreement was confirmed by Pope Julius II on January 24, 1506, but no fresh bull was issued, nor was the actual line ever marked out by either power. According to calculations that have been made, however, this line of demarcation would, on our modern maps, pass to the east of the mouths of the Amazon, or say longitude $49^{\circ} 45'$ west.³ This is to the east of the most easterly point of Newfoundland, the meridian of 52° just missing Newfoundland.

¹ S. E. Dawson in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 2nd series, vol. v. 1899, pp. 529-34.

² M. Fernandez de Navarrete, *Colección de los Viajes*, etc., II. 2, LXXV., Madrid, 1825.

³ H. Harrisse, *The Diplomatic History of America*, passim (London, 1897).

On Ribero's map, however, the line is made to cut Cabot Strait in longitude 60° W.

Since in matters ecclesiastical, the kings of England and of France did not recognise the supreme jurisdiction of the Popes, they were even less disposed to do so in affairs temporal. Accordingly in 1496 Henry VII granted letters patent to John Cabot for a voyage westward, and on June 24, 1497, Cabot sighted our modern Cape Breton. On Cabot's return to England fresh letters patent were issued for a second voyage in 1498, during which John and Sebastian¹ probably explored the coast of America from Greenland almost to Florida.¹

Although the Spanish ambassador in England wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella that these discoveries fell within the Spanish sphere of influence, no protest appears to have been made by them; for Henry VII continued to despatch expeditions to Newfoundland in 1502 and 1503. During these same years the Portuguese also visited this region in the hope of finding a north-west passage to their possessions in the East. The results of their explorations are set forth on Ribero's map, as are those of the Spaniard, Stephen Gomez, who, in 1524, sought to find in the north a passage to the east similar to that discovered by Magellan in the south.

Although the region about Newfoundland had thus been explored by the English, the Portuguese and the Spaniards, and, as we see on Ribero's map, was considered to fall within the Portuguese sphere of influence, yet the French had early discovered the rich cod-fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland, if, indeed, Bretons had not made their way thither before the Cabots. We first hear definitely of their presence on the Banks in 1504, but their numbers increased rapidly. Fights frequently occurred between the French and the Portuguese, which latter seemed to the French 'to have drunk the dust of Alexander the Great's heart, so immense was their ambition.' 'Had it been in their power

¹ H. P. Biggar, *The Precursors of Cartier* (Ottawa, 1911).
T.S. — VOL. XI.

to do so,' continues this writer, 'they would have closed the seas from Cape Finisterre to Iceland.'¹

In 1523 Francis I sent Giovanni da Verrazano, an Italian from Florence, to seek a passage to the East through these seas. Sailing westward from Madeira early in 1524, Verrazano reached the coast of Florida and proceeded northward as far as Newfoundland. Ten years later Francis despatched on a similar errand Jacques Cartier, a Breton sailor of St. Malo, who was born in 1491, and was thus forty-three years of age. As Cartier knew Portuguese, it is probable he had sailed to that country, if not to Brazil, and before being entrusted by King Francis with the important charge now conferred upon him, must have sailed to Newfoundland many times on fishing voyages. Cartier hoped by sailing through the Strait of Belle Isle, which was then called the Strait of Château Bay—a name that still persists—to discover farther west 'certain islands and countries where, it is said, there will be found great quantity of gold and other riches.'²

Setting sail from St. Malo with two ships on April 20, 1534, Cartier reached Brest, inside the Strait of Belle Isle, on June 10. This harbour was the terminus of the previous discoveries in that region. The gulf of St. Lawrence beyond was known simply as the Great Bay.

Passing down the west coast of Newfoundland and past Prince Edward Island, then considered to be part of the mainland, Cartier reached the Paie de Chaleur, which he was disappointed to discover was not a strait leading to the East. At Gaspé Bay he seized two Indians, whom he carried off with him to France. A mirage stopped him from sailing between Gaspé and the island of Anticosti, which he rounded at the eastern extremity, and on sighting the Labrador shore, Cartier gave to this portion of the gulf the name of St. Peter's Strait. As the season was now late, it was

¹ Ch. de La Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine française*, iii. 280 (Paris, 1906).

² Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS. fr. 15028, No. 618.

closed decided to postpone the exploration of this strait until the following year. Cartier thereupon returned to Blanc Sablon, in the Strait of Belle Isle, and, setting sail thence on August 15, reached St. Malo on September 5 after a voyage of only three weeks.¹

Francis I directed Cartier to explore this Strait of St. Peter, and on May 19, 1535, Cartier again left St. Malo with three ships. On August 9 he anchored in our Pillage Bay, on the coast of Labrador opposite Anticosti Island. This being St. Lawrence's Day, Cartier named Pillage Bay the Bay of St. Lawrence, which name was afterwards transferred, through a careless reading of Cartier's narrative, to the whole gulf, and eventually to the great river up which Cartier now proceeded to make his way. Cartier himself always called the St. Lawrence, the river of Hochelaga.

On September 7, 1535, Cartier reached the Huron-Iroquois village of Stadacona, near the site of the modern city of Quebec, which was not founded till 1608 by Champlain. At Stadacona lived the two Indians seized by Cartier at Gaspé. They had gone to Gaspé in the previous summer on a fishing expedition.

Laying up his ships in the river St. Charles, which here enters the St. Lawrence from the north, Cartier twelve days later passed up the St. Lawrence in small boats to the Indian village of Hochelaga, on the island of Montreal, where the rapids of Lachine checked his further progress westward.

When Cartier from the top of Mont Royal, at Hochelaga, was examining the course of the river Ottawa, which here enters the St. Lawrence, an incident occurred which explains the subsequent efforts of the French to penetrate to a mysterious country called the kingdom of Saguenay.

'This [river Ottawa] we think is the river which flows by the kingdom and province of Saguenay. And without our putting

¹ Grant and Biggar, Lescarbot's *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, ii, 27-58 (Toronto, 1911).

any question or making any sign, our Indian guides took the silver chain of the Captain's whistle and the handle of a dagger which hung at the side of one of our sailors which was of brass as yellow as gold, and made signs that such things came from up the said river . . . but for lack of an interpreter we could not find out the distance to this country.' ¹

On returning to Ste. Croix, where he passed the winter, Cartier learned that while it was possible to reach the kingdom of Saguenay by the river of that name, the best route was up the river St. Lawrence 'to Hochelaga, to a stream which descends from the said Saguenay and enters the said river [St. Lawrence], and that it took one moon to go thither.' The Indians gave Cartier to understand that the inhabitants of Saguenay, who lived in towns and were clothed like the French, 'possessed a great quantity of gold and also red copper.' Canada, according to Cartier, embraced only that portion of the river St. Lawrence in the neighbourhood of Stadacona, near the site of the present city of Quebec. The word is derived without any doubt from the Huron-Iroquois word for 'village,' the modern form being *kanata*. Hochelaga included the district about the island of Montreal, while Saguenay lay to the north of Canada and of Hochelaga.

On May 3, 1536, Cartier seized eight of the Indians of Stadacona, and with two Indian children presented to him by one of the chiefs who lived farther up the St. Lawrence, set sail for France on May 6, 1536, and on July 6 arrived safely at St. Malo, having passed out into the Atlantic by way of Cabot Strait, to the south of Newfoundland.

Unfortunately, just a month before Cartier reached France, war had again broken out between Francis I and Charles V. As a result nothing could be done for some years to continue the search for the mysterious kingdom of Saguenay. On the other hand, no news of Cartier's discovery of the river St. Lawrence reached Spain at this time, so that so far as the Spaniards were concerned,

¹ Lescarbot, *History of New France*, ii. 122.

the geography of this region remained as depicted upon Ribero's map of 1529.

On June 18, 1538, at Nice, Pope Paul III induced Charles and Francis to agree to a ten years' truce. Their reconciliation was completed at Aiguesmortes, where they spent four days together.

Francis was again free to turn his attention to the mysterious kingdom of Saguenay, which promised to unfold before the eyes of the French the riches of a northern Mexico or Peru. He reimbursed Cartier for the keep of the Indians since their arrival in France, and received from Cartier a long memorandum setting forth his requirements in order to make the expedition to the Saguenay a success.

Cartier asked for six ships of at least one hundred tons' burthen and two barques of from forty-five to fifty tons, provisioned, all of them, for two years with provisions of the best quality. Three boats, to be put together in Canada, were also to be taken. In addition to the 120 sailors to man the above, Cartier required some hundred and fifty mechanics and soldiers, among them being forty harquebusiers, thirty carpenters, ten master masons, three lime-makers, thirteen tile-makers, two blacksmiths, two locksmiths, four miners, two goldsmiths 'skilled in handling precious stones,' four artillerymen, six priests, three barbers, and two apothecaries. Beasts, birds, seed, and artillery were also to be taken.¹

Francis I was personally most interested, and spent several evenings poring over charts of those parts with a Portuguese pilot whom he had taken into his service.

'On two charts belonging to the king, which are well painted and illuminated but not very accurate,' wrote this man to the King of Portugal, 'Francis I showed me a river in the land of Cod whither he has sent twice. On this matter he is very intent, and what he wishes to do would make men marvel. Jacques Cartier on his last voyage brought back three Indians, two of whom are dead, but the survivor is chief of three or four towns, according to the king of France; for all I write I heard from his own lips.

¹ G. Ribier, *Lettres et Memoires*, i. 212 (Paris, 1666).

He told me further that this river which he sent to discover is 80 leagues in length and that up it some distance are two falls. Of the ships he wishes to send thither two will be brigantines which can be taken overland past these falls; for the Indian chief told the king that beyond these falls there is a large city called Saguenay, where there are many gold and silver mines, and abundance of cloves, nutmegs, and pepper. I believe the king of France will decide to send thither a third time, seeing his great desire towards this.¹

What deterred Francis I from doing so in 1539 and 1540 we do not know, unless it was the voyage of the Emperor across France in the autumn of 1539. Charles V was everywhere fêted and royally entertained, spending a week in Paris in a round of festivities. Early in 1540 Charles passed into the Low Countries, where he suppressed the rebellion of Ghent.

Here in the Low Countries, in August 1540, Charles suddenly learned that in spite of Francis' recent profession of friendship, and in contravention of his treaties with himself and Portugal, Francis was 'openly granting licences to all his subjects to try their fortunes in the Indies in the discovery and conquest of new lands.'² Charles immediately directed his ambassador in France to inform Francis and his ministers with what astonishment he had heard of the granting of these licences, which ran directly contrary to the terms of the truce of Nice, signed only two years before.

The Emperor at the same time forwarded this information to Spain, giving instructions to the Cardinal of Toledo and the Spanish Council of State to make preparations for fitting out a fleet to attack the French, should Francis still persist in allowing his subjects to proceed to the new lands.

The Cardinal of Toledo replied to the Emperor on October 11, 1540, informing him that the Council of the Indies, after discussing the matter with the Cardinals and

¹ Torre do Tombo, *Corpo Chronologico*, Parte 3^a, Moço 14, Doc. 37.

² *Calendar of Spanish State Papers*, vi. pt. i. p. 251.

ver is 800 other members of the Council of State, had decided that the following steps should immediately be taken :

1. Secret inquiries should be instituted in the French ports to discover whether a fleet was being fitted out, and if so, where, and whither bound.

2. Preparations should be begun at Seville for fitting out a strong fleet, and 4000 bushels of wheat were to be purchased there.

3. Ships for the Indies were to be armed and to sail together under convoy.

4. The construction of all forts in the Indies was to be hastened, and those already completed were to be strengthened.

5. Finally all citizens in the Indies were to be provided with arms.¹

A week later, on October 17, Francis openly issued a commission to Jacques Cartier for the proposed expedition to Canada, Hochelaga, and the kingdom of Saguenay :

'With the desire,' ran Cartier's commission, 'to learn and have knowledge of several countries said to be inhabited and possessed by savage peoples living without knowledge of God, we have at great expense already sent several good pilots, our subjects, to discover in the said countries, and among others we sent out our dear and well-beloved Jacques Cartier, who has discovered great tracts of the countries of Canada and Hochelaga which form the confines of Asia on the west, which countries he found productive of good commodities . . . in consideration whereof we have decided to send back the said Cartier to the said countries of Canada and Hochelaga, and as far as the land of Saguenay, should he be able to penetrate there.'²

Cartier was appointed master-pilot of the fleet, with power to choose fifty persons suitable for settlers from the districts of Paris, Rouen, Caen, Blois, Tours, Maine, Anjou, and Guyenne.

¹ Archivo General de Simancas, *Estado, Castilla*, leg. 50, ff. 103-6 and 108-11; and Archivo de Indias, Seville, est. 110, cajon 7, leg. 31. Cf. also British Museum, Add. MS., 25502, ff. 101-05.

² J. P. Baxter, *A Memoir of Jacques Cartier*, 339-42 (New York, 1900).

Knowledge of the publication of Cartier's commission was at once conveyed to the Emperor, who on November 11 again wrote to the Cardinal of Toledo on this subject. After speaking of the issue of this commission to Cartier, he continued :

'The efforts, therefore, of our ambassador, and those of the ambassador of Portugal, have up to the present not borne fruit. Although I have ordered a reply to be sent to my ambassador in France to continue to insist and make fitting instance that the said licence be not proceeded with, being, as it is, in direct contravention of the treaty between us and the said King of France, and contrary to the concession granted by the Apostolic See to the Kings of Castile and Portugal for the said conquest, it has appeared to me fitting to advise you thereof that you may consider and confer in Spain respecting such further measures as may now be desirable, besides those already taken.

'And it would be well for you to send full information of this licence to the King of Portugal, that in the same way he may on his part take such measures as are required ; and let the person who is in command of the said fleet carry orders to unite with the fleet of the said King of Portugal, and let each fleet give help and support to the other. And should they meet with the ships of the said Jacques Cartier, let them engage and destroy them, since the intention of these Frenchmen is known ; and let all the men taken from their ships be thrown into the sea, not saving any one person ; for this is necessary as a warning against similar expeditions.' ¹

On December 13, 1540, the Cardinal of Toledo acknowledged the receipt of this letter of November 11 from the Emperor, and enclosed a second memorandum giving the results of the further deliberations of the Council of the Indies, at which deliberations had also assisted the Conde de Osorno and the High Commander of Leon, both of the Council of State. The opinion of this Council was that :

1. A spy should be sent to St. Malo to gain information concerning Cartier.

2. The officials at Seville should make a report on all the ships in Andalusia, that those required for the fleet might be seized.

¹ Archivo General de Simancas, *Estado, Portugal*, leg. 372, fol. 6.

3. The Seville officials were also to be instructed to provide one thousand fighting men.

4. A commander of the fleet was to be chosen from among Cortés, the Adalantado of the Canaries and Alvaro de Bazan; and finally

5. The King of Portugal was to be asked to close his ports to French ships.¹

Meanwhile the Emperor's representations to King Francis against the despatch of the latter's fleet remained unheeded. To the Commendador Mayor of Alcantara, who was then in France, the French king had replied that 'he was not sending these ships in order to make war upon or contravene the peace and friendship then obtaining with the Emperor, but that the sun gave warmth to him as well as to others, and he much desired to see Adam's will, to learn how he had partitioned the world.'²

On December 27 the Spanish ambassador in France wrote to the Emperor as follows :

'SIRE,—I again spoke with the King of France concerning the navigation of his subjects to the Indies, not neglecting any of the points contained in your letters, nor any which I thought might have the desired effect, to which he replied as before, that he could not desist from giving the said licence to his subjects, but at least they will not touch at places belonging to your Majesty, nor go to parts not discovered by his predecessors, and belonging to his crown more than thirty years before the ships of Spain had sailed to the new Indies; and as to what I told him that permission to navigate these parts was conceded to your Majesty's predecessors by the pope, and applied to them, he answered that the popes hold spiritual jurisdiction, but that it does not lie with them to distribute lands among kings. In conclusion, Sire, I have not been able to settle anything but that his subjects shall not go to your lands or ports.'³

On receipt of this letter at Spire, Emperor on February 5, 1541, again wrote to the Cardinal of Toledo in

¹ Baxter, *op. cit.*, 357-9. The Spanish text is in T. Buckingham Smith, *Colección de varios Documentos*, etc., pp. 114-16 (London, 1857).

² Simancas, *Estado, Castilla*, leg. 53, ff. 333-5; British Museum, Add. MS. 28592, ff. 266-7.

³ Archives Nationales, Paris, K. 1485, Années 1540-1541.

Spain, approving what had been already done by the Council of the Indies and enclosing a copy of the above letter. The Emperor informed the Cardinal that he was writing to his ambassador at Rome to report the matter to the Holy Father and to give him to understand that the French should not be allowed to do as they are doing, since it was contrary to the Treaty of Nice, concluded through the intervention of his Holiness. Charles added that he 'held his title and right to the Indies from the Apostolic See, and his Holiness, as Father of all, should intervene to settle this matter and prevent the troubles which otherwise may arise.'¹

This communication was acknowledged by the Cardinal on March 24, 1541, who wrote as follows regarding the proposal to appeal to the Pope:

'To us it appears that your principal objection to the action of the French king should be based upon the fact that your Majesty discovered, conquered and peopled these Indies at great expense, and that you have since continued in peaceful possession of the same; but do not insist too much upon the concession from his Holiness, both because of the difficulty which this might create, and more particularly because of the little regard paid to this argument by the King of France.'²

A third memorandum was enclosed setting forth that the Council of the Indies, having carefully considered the whole subject, had resolved, in view of the fact that the treasury was empty, and that 150,000 ducats would be necessary to fit out a fleet, to equip no fleet for that year, but to send weapons and arms of all kinds to the Indies.³

Meanwhile Francis, unmoved by the protests of the Spanish and Portuguese ambassadors, continued his preparations for the despatch of a third expedition to the river St. Lawrence in the spring of 1541. On January 15, 1541, he appointed Jean François de La Rocque, Sieur de Roberval (a village not far from Compiègne) lieutenant-general and

¹ Simancas, *Estado, Castilla*, leg. 55, ff. 115 et seq.

² *Ibid.*, leg. 51, ff. 5-7.

³ Buckingham Smith, *op. cit.* 103-7. Baxter, *op. cit.*, 347-8.

leader of the whole enterprise. Roberval was a soldier, and had gained considerable experience under La March ; but, so far as is known, he had never been to sea. Until Canada was reached, therefore, Cartier was to have the chief command, but on shore Roberval was to direct the operations for the conquest of the kingdom of Saguenay. Francis now so far recognised the claims of Spain and Portugal as to insert in the letters patent to Roberval a proviso to the effect that he was not 'to occupy any land under the subjection and obedience of our very dear and beloved brothers the Emperor and the King of Portugal.'

Since volunteers were not forthcoming as settlers in the new world, and it was hoped to make a permanent settlement, Francis I gave permission to Roberval to take from the prisons such prisoners condemned to death as in the opinion of the King's lieutenants seemed likely to be useful in the new land. For such persons the King's aim was, ran Roberval's commission, 'to commute the penalty of death into an honest and useful voyage.' Should, however, any of these people return to France without permission, they were to be executed, without any hope of pardon, in the town where first they had been condemned.

This commission, a copy of which was at once forwarded to the Emperor, roused Bonvalot, the Emperor's ambassador, to fresh exertions, and a spy was despatched to St. Malo to furnish a detailed report on the preparations being made there. Early in April this emissary informed Bonvalot that the expedition under Cartier and Roberval was bound for Canada, a country 600 leagues beyond Newfoundland, the distance to which latter country was 760 leagues. Ten ships, provisioned for two years, were being fitted out. Of these ships six were at St. Malo in charge of Cartier, while Roberval was bringing the remaining four from Rouen and Honfleur. Under Cartier were twenty master pilots and four hundred sailors, who were dressed in a black and white livery. He also had twenty carpenters, and was taking eighteen or twenty small boats, each of which was to be armed with

light artillery. Roberval had under him three hundred fighting men armed with harquebuses, cross-bows, and small shields, the latter to protect them against the arrows of the Indians. They were taking in addition twenty horses, as many cows, four bulls, one hundred sheep, the same number of goats, and ten pigs for breeding in the country. Carts, farming implements, and twenty ploughmen also formed part of the expedition, which hoped to sail eight days after Easter and to reach Canada in four weeks.¹

This information reached Charles V at Ratisbon early in May. On May 7, 1541, he thereupon wrote to the Cardinal of Toledo as follows:—

‘I have received letters from my ambassador in France, which will accompany this, by which you will learn of the departure of the said fleet, and its alleged destination, and because of the speed with which it has been despatched, there appears to be no means of impeding the expedition. Nevertheless, it would be well to investigate where these new lands spoken of in the said report lie, which it is said are not more than 750 leagues from France and another 600 to Canada, whither they go to explore and settle. This land Canada being so near, it would seem to fall within our limits. Since this matter calls for a speedy remedy, I charge you forthwith to summon the Councils of State and of the Indies, to discuss the question of the fleet which it is necessary to fit out; and if it cannot be fitted out this year, let it be got ready for the coming year. And having communicated with the very reverend Cardinal, our Governor of the Indies, advise me of what appears necessary, that proper steps may be taken. And I must not neglect to warn you, that even if this land where the said French are going to settle does not lie within our limits and is of little value, they may from thence go farther afield and reach the lands within our limits, which would be a great anxiety and bring destruction upon our colonies; and by building fortresses and settling in that land they may take root and fortify themselves, and it will be difficult to drive them out, unless it is done speedily. And as I wish to know whether the said new lands and Canada lie to the north, or in what part and limits they lie, procure information and advise me thereof; and con-

¹ *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, vol. lxxiii. pp. 297-300 (Paris, 1912).

sider whether it would be well to send a caravel after the said fleet to see what it does, and to what region it goes, so that some intelligence may be had thereof, in order to take such steps as the occasion requires.' ¹

On June 26, 1541, the Cardinal of Toledo replied to this letter as follows:

'We saw the report which your Majesty caused to be sent to us respecting what has been learnt concerning the fleet which the King of France is sending to the Indies. Here all that your Majesty wrote upon the matter was discussed and debated not only with the Cardinal and the members of the Councils of State and of the Indies, but also with trustworthy persons of much experience in such matters; and especially with the Marques del Valle [Cortés]; and with their approval such resolutions were adopted as your Majesty will see in the memorandum drawn up by the members of the Council of the Indies, which will accompany this.' ²

Resolutions of the Council of State and of the Indies concerning what was presented to them relating to the Fleet sent out by France.

'It is agreed that if this report is true, that the first land whither they went is distant 760 leagues from St. Malo in Brittany, where the fleet was fitted out, it can be no other land than that which is entered from Bacallaos, a land the Bretons claim to have discovered long ago, since to that region the distance is exactly 760 leagues, and there is no other land on the map on this side or beyond Florida which is that distance away. It is believed this must be the place, and by adding the other 600 leagues, which they say must be traversed beyond Newfoundland, the Bahama Channel is reached, which is the best position they could seize, on the outbreak of war, to inflict injury upon the vessels from the Indies, since most of these come through the said Bahama Channel. This indeed must be their main object in making a settlement upon that coast; for although the land is unproductive, this route is of the greatest importance for their purpose. If this is the case, it is clear they intend to colonise within your Majesty's line of demarcation.

¹ Simancas, *Estado, Castilla*, leg. 54, ff. 31-6.

² *Ibid.*, leg. 51, ff. 22-6.

'Since, however, nothing certain is yet known, it seems best, in order to make sure concerning their expedition, to send two caravels on the track of this French fleet. One caravel should be sent to the islands of Cape Verde, to ascertain whether the fleet has passed that way; for some point out that they may intend to go to the river Plate or to the Amazon. This caravel could go and return quickly, and having learned they have not passed the Cape Verde islands, we shall be sure they have gone to Bacallaos.'

This memorandum having been sent to the Cardinal of Seville, he replied as follows :

'TALAVERA, *June 10, 1541.*

'I have read two or three times the decision of the Councils of State and of the Indies with reference to the fleet which it is said France is sending to the Levies, and after carefully considering their lordships' deliberations, see nothing to add to them.

'I am, however, persuaded that the French are thinking neither of the river Plate nor of the Bahama Channel, where it would be no use for them to found colonies and put themselves in a position to prey upon our ships, since this would be breaking the truce between France and Spain, which all men ought reasonably to hope will still continue a few years.

'To me it seems that their motive is that they think from what they have learned that these provinces [of Canada, Hochelaga, and Saguenay] are rich in gold and silver, and they hope to do as we have done [in Mexico and Peru], but in my judgment they are making a mistake, for with the exception of the fisheries, this whole coast as far as Florida is utterly unproductive. In consequence they will waste their efforts, or at best return with the loss of most of their people and the greater portion of all they have taken from France.' ¹

In accordance with the memorandum of the Council of the Indies, two caravels were despatched in search of Cartier in the summer of 1541. That for the Cape Verde islands left the Guadalquivir on August 26, and a month later reached those islands, where it learned that four French ships had sailed west-south-west. Proceeding in the same direction, the caravel was forced by bad weather to take refuge in

¹ Buckingham Smith, *op. cit.*, 109-11; Baxter, *op. cit.*, 350-54.

Porto Rico. It heard nothing of Cartier, but reached Spain safely in the following January, 1542.¹

The second caravel, for Newfoundland, left Bayona, in the north of Spain, on July 25, two months after Cartier's departure from St. Malo for the St. Lawrence. At Newfoundland this caravel learned that Cartier had already passed into the St. Lawrence. With this information the caravel returned to Spain, reaching home on November 17, 1541.²

According to the only extant account of Cartier's third voyage, which is preserved to us in English by Richard Hakluyt, Cartier had sailed from St. Malo with five ships towards the end of May 1541.

'And after Cartier had caused the five ships to be furnished and set in good order, Monsieur Roberval came down to St. Malo and found the ships fallen down to the roadstead with their yards across, full ready to depart and set sail, staying for nothing but the coming of the general and the payment of the furniture. But because Monsieur Roberval had not as yet his artillery, powder, and munitions, which he had provided in Champagne and Normandy, and he was loath to depart without them, he determined that the said Cartier should depart and go before while he himself would prepare a ship or two at Honfleur, whither he thought his things were come. And after the conclusion of these things and the said Master Roberval had taken muster and view of the gentlemen, soldiers and mariners, the wind coming fair, the aforesaid five ships set sail together, well furnished and victualled for two years, the 23 May, 1541.'³

Storms separated the ships, which had not thirty hours of fair wind. 'The cattle, goats, hogs, and other beasts were watered on cider and other dainties.' The fleet was collected in Newfoundland, and reached Stadacona on August 23. Cartier informed the new Indian chief, Donacona's successor, that Donacona was dead, but that the other Indians 'had stayed in France as great lords, and would not return to their country, whereat the new chief

¹ Buckingham Smith, *op. cit.*, 116-18.

² J. T. Medina, *Una expedición española a la Tierra de los Bacallaos, 1541* (Santiago, 1896).

³ R. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, viii. 264 (Glasgow, 1904).

made no show of anger,' and I think he took it so well,' adds the chronicler, 'because he remained lord and governor of the country by the death of the said Donnacona.'

After laying up three of his ships in the river of Cape Rouge, which enters the St. Lawrence from the north, nine miles above Quebec, Cartier on September 7 set out in two boats for Hochelaga, 'in order to view and understand the fashion of the rapids which had to be passed to go to Saguenay, that he might be the readier in the spring to pass farther, and during the winter could put all things needful in readiness for this business.' Cartier's brother-in-law, the Vicomte de Beaupré, was left in charge of Charlesbourg Royal, as the fort at Cape Rouge was called, after the second son of Francis I, Charles d'Orléans.

Cartier reached Hochelaga and proceeded to make an examination of the rapids of Lachine and Carillon at St. Anne, now Oka, at the mouth of the Ottawa. On inquiring of the Indians how many more rapids he had to pass 'to go to Saguenay,' Cartier was informed 'that there was but one more rapid to pass, and the distance was but a third farther than he had travelled from Hochelaga.' After distributing trinkets to the four hundred and more Indians who crowded about him at Hochelaga, Cartier returned to Charlesbourg Royal, where he passed the winter.

Two forts were built, one at the top of the cliff, and one at the foot of it, near the river St. Lawrence. The fort at the top of the cliff 'was very beautiful to behold and of great strength, having a great tower, two courts, a building 40 to 50 feet long, as well as divers chambers, an hall, kitchen, pantries and cellars, mills for grinding corn, an oven, and a well.' There was even a stove. The fort at the foot of the cliff also had a great tower of two stories, with two courts and good buildings.

Cartier having learned after his return from Hochelaga that 'a wonderful number of the people of the country had assembled at Stadacona, while the Indians who were accustomed to come to the forts with fish and fresh provisions

no longer did so, caused all things in the fortress to be set in good order'—with which words the narrative ends. We do not hear of Cartier again until June 1543, when, after passing the winter at Cape Rouge, on his way home to France he met Roberval in the harbour of St. John's, Newfoundland.

Whether Roberval, after Cartier had sailed from St. Malo, found his artillery, powder, and munitions at Honfleur as he expected, we do not know, but in any event he did not follow Cartier to the St. Lawrence during the summer of 1541. According to reports from the Spanish ambassador in France to the Emperor Roberval encountered great difficulties in furnishing his ships with provisions and in finding suitable colonists for the St. Lawrence. He hoped, however, to be ready to sail by the middle of September.

As it would then be too late to go to Canada, the Spanish ambassador was of opinion that Roberval would sail towards Spain and the Indies. Charles soon learned in fact that Roberval had sent a message to Francis I that as it was then too late to go to Canada, 'Roberval might do the king other service which would be pleasing unto him, if he so desired.' Charles interpreted this to mean an attack on the coast of Spain, and charged the Cardinal of Toledo to send an immediate warning to the coast towns, which was done.

The Spanish ambassador in France urged the Emperor to attack Roberval at once, but the difficulty was to find him. In October he lay off St. Malo, but did not venture to land, although he went ashore for flour and bread. It appeared that while he could not go to Canada, he dared not land in France on account of robberies he had committed, both upon Frenchmen and foreigners. With Roberval was also joined Pierre de Bidoux, one of the most notorious French pirates of the day.¹

On a complaint being made to Henry VIII by some English merchants who had been robbed by Roberval of 600 quintals of iron and 400 morocco skins, 'on pretext that they were laden in Spain and therefore belonged to

¹ Simancas, *Estado*, leg. 373, fol. 42

Spaniards,' Henry instructed Paget, his ambassador in France, to demand an immediate audience of the French king. Paget delivered to King Francis a letter from Marillac, the French ambassador in England :

' When Francis had read it, he spake very sore words against Roberval ' [wrote Paget to Henry VIII], ' requiring me to signify unto your Majesty that he had done and would do all he could for the apprehension of Roberval, who had deceived him like a false traitor thief. For Roberval had promised to conquer the land of Canada, for which purpose the king delivered him ships with all other things for the furniture of the same, and gave him leave to take out of the prisons as many prisoners as he wished for the peopling of the said country, " but now," said Francis, " he leaveth this enterprise and lieth upon the coast of Brittany, robbing Englishmen and Frenchmen and all that come his way ; but he shall be hanged by the neck if I catch him." ' ¹

Whether this show of anger on the part of King Francis was real may be doubted. In all probability he did not wish to give any cause of complaint to King Henry, who was on the point of joining him in a war against Charles.

All we know is that a month later Roberval finally set sail for Canada from La Rochelle,

' in 3 tall ships furnished chiefly at the king's cost and having in his fleet 200 persons, as well men as women, and divers gentlemen of quality such as M. de Saint-Nectaire, M. de Lespinay, M. de Noirefontaine, de Frotté [a son of the President of the Parliament of Paris], La Brosse, de Miré, La Salle, Royeze, de Longueval, and de Villeneuve.' ²

Clement Marot was to have charge of the fighting men, but it is doubtful if he actually sailed with Roberval.³

Contrary winds delayed them, but on June 8 Roberval reached St. John's, Newfoundland, where a few days later Cartier and his company cast anchor on their return from wintering at Cape Rouge above Quebec. Cartier informed

¹ R. H. Brodie, *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, vol. xvii. Nos. 120 and 166.

² Hakluyt, *op. cit.*, viii. 283.

³ Brodie, *op. cit.*, xvi. No. 488, p. 234.

Roberval that with his small company he could not withstand the savages who went about daily to annoy him, and that this was the cause of his return. From Spanish sources we learn that thirty-five of Cartier's people had been killed by the Indians, and doubtless others had died of scurvy. Cartier had brought with him from Canada ten casks of gold, seven of silver, and seven quintals of 'pearls and rubies'; and on the following Sunday this ore was tried in a furnace and found to be good. Cartier furthermore commended the country to be very rich and fruitful.

Roberval commanded Cartier to return with him to Canada, but

'Cartier and his company, moved as it seemeth with ambition, because they would have all the glory of the discovery of those parts themselves, without taking their leaves, stole privily away the next night and departed home for Brittany.'

Roberval spent the greater part of June at St. John's 'composing a quarrel between some French fishermen and certain Portugals,' and taking on board wood and fresh water. He appears to have seized by force from the fishermen any provisions he required.

About the end of June he proceeded through the Strait of Belle Isle, and, making his way up the St. Lawrence, took up his quarters in Cartier's old buildings at Charlesbourg Royal, which Roberval renamed France-Roy, while to the river he gave the name of Francis Prime.

During the winter provisions ran short, scurvy broke out, and some fifty persons died. According to our only chronicler of these events, 'Roberval used very good justice, and punished every man according to his offence. One was hanged for theft, others were put in irons, and divers were whipped, both men and women. By this means they lived in quiet.'

On June 6, 1543, Roberval set off up the river with seventy men in eight boats towards the kingdom of Saguenay, said to be 'rich and wealthy in precious stones.' The fort was left in charge of de Royeze and thirty men.

On Thursday, June 14, Lespinay, La Brosse, Longueval, and Frotté returned and reported that one of the boats had upset, whereby Noirefontaine, Le Vasseur, and six others had been drowned. A few days later five more gentlemen reached France-Roy, with letters from Roberval to wait for him until July 22. Here the narrative unfortunately terminates.

On September 14 of the previous year, 1542, Roberval, after reaching France-Roy, had sent home Sainterre and Guinecourt in two vessels, 'to come back again unto him the next year furnished with victuals and other things, as it should please the king.' These two ships reached France safely, and on January 26, 1543, were ordered by Francis I to carry provisions to Roberval. It is probable they did so, and that Cartier sailed in one of them. He and Roberval were both back in France in the autumn of that year, 1543. War had again broken out between Francis and Charles in July of the previous year, 1542, and no one now spared a thought for the mysterious kingdom of Saguenay.

Cartier's diamonds had also proved a complete failure, although, according to a writer of the time, they enriched the French language with a new expression; for henceforth it became customary to describe anything which was perfectly worthless as 'a Canadian diamond.'

On September 18, 1544, Francis and Charles again made peace, but the former, who died in the following year, never again showed any interest in Canada and the kingdom of Saguenay. As for Charles, in the Instructions to the future Philip II in 1548, he wrote:

'Regarding the Indies, you will not cease to keep an eye upon the French, to make sure they have no intention of sending thither a fleet either openly or otherwise. In their previous attempts one has noticed, however, that they have not shown much tenacity, and if a rigorous opposition is maintained, they give way at once and withdraw.' ¹

¹ Ch. Weiss, *Papiers d'état du Cardinal de Granville*, iii. 296 (Paris, 1842), in the *Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France*.

